

# **Rules and Regulations for the Operation of the Water and Wastewater System of the City of Greensboro**

*(with amendments through December 5, 2000))*

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## **A. Authority for Rules and Regulations**

These rules and regulations for the Operation of the Water and Wastewater system of the City of Greensboro are adopted pursuant to the authority of Section 6.81 (b) of the Charter of the City of Greensboro and Section 29-6 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances.

## **B. Definitions**

The following terms shall be given the meanings hereinafter ascribed:

1. Building - A structure as defined in the City Building Code.
2. Connection - That part of the water or wastewater service line which runs from the main to the property line, including all appurtenances to make the service complete and ready for use.
3. Capacity Use Fee - That fee charged to partially recover directly from new customers the cost of the capacity of the utility treatment systems used to serve them.
4. Consumer - The person legally or equitably responsible for the payment of charges for water or sewer service on any premises.
5. Improved street - Any street having a wearing surface of concrete, brick, stone block, asphalt, or any bituminous compound.
6. Inflow - Water which enters the sanitary sewer system during rainfall events, through defective pipe or appurtenances in the sewer main or in the service connections or by way of illegal connections (i.e. roof drains, area drains).
7. Lateral - That portion of the water or sewer connection which include the meter box, meter setter and connection but excludes the meter.
8. Main - The water or wastewater pipe usually laid in a street generally running parallel to the property line which distributes water or collects wastewater.
9. Occupant - The consumer who is actually in possession or control of any premises.
10. Owner - The person having legal or equitable title to any premises.

11. Person - Any individual, partnership, co-partnership, firm, company, corporation, association, joint stock company, trust estate, government entity or their legal representative agents or assigns.
12. Premises - Land, building, or other structure and appurtenances thereto.
13. Sewer – City owned sewer line. Public portion of the sanitary sewer system.
14. Service line - Small line which may service a house or a limited number of structures and which may be in the street or on private property.
15. Domestic Waste - Wastewater generated from human waste or any wastewater with concentrations at or below the pollutant specific numerical concentrations published by the EPA as "domestic concentrations" and not subject to any other discharge standards or requirements.
16. Properly shredded garbage - Shall mean the wastes from the preparation, cooking, and dispensing of food that have been shredded to such degree that all particles will be carried freely under the flow conditions normally prevailing in public sewers, with no particle greater than one-quarter inch (1/4") in any dimension.
17. Wastewater system - Shall mean facilities for collecting, pumping, treating, and disposing of wastewater and industrial waste.

## **C. Provisions of Service**

### ***1. Application for Connection***

Every application for water or wastewater service shall list on forms provided by the City; the property owners, the street on which the lot is located, and the number of the house and/or building. When the size of the service and the applicable fees of the connection have been determined, the applicant shall pay the fees and shall be issued a permit for the desired connection. The City shall have no responsibility for the design of a sprinkler or other fire protection system. Application for a connection to serve such a system shall be made exactly as outlined above except that the size of the connection desired shall be placed upon the application.

The installation of water laterals and sewer laterals may be done by a licensed utility contractor. The installation of all laterals or settings of the required meters shall be done only after payment of appropriate fees and approval of an application for service. The City or a licensed utility contractor may install water or sewer laterals from the main to the property line and shall be responsible for all excavations, laying of pipes, backfilling and pavement replacement. Installation by utility contractor shall be by approved plans and shall be inspected by City personnel.

## **2. *Service Outside Corporate Limits***

All water and wastewater service to new customers outside the corporate limits who are tapping onto water and/or wastewater lines which were not installed under the existing agreement between the City of Greensboro and Guilford County shall be allowed to tap onto the respective lines only on the following conditions:

- (a) Privilege fees, in lieu of assessments, shall be charged at the same rate as is currently applicable under the contract between the City and the County.
- (b) Connection charges shall be charged at the rate as specified for connections inside the Corporate Limits. Capacity Use Fee shall be charged at the rate as specified for outside the corporate limits.
- (c) An agreement shall be signed by the customer to abide by all pertinent Laws, Rules, Regulations and Contracts on file with the City Clerk including the following conditions:
  - (1) Any unpaid water or wastewater bill shall be and remain a lien upon the property served until fully paid.
  - (2) No deposit shall be required of an owner of any premise. Deposits shall be required of all tenants in accordance with Section G-2 of these Rules and Regulations.
  - (3) No person, other than a municipality, may sell or offer for sale any water purchased from the City.
  - (4) Any property owner who is to be permitted to tap onto an existing City of Greensboro water and/or sewer line, or extend a water and/or sewer line shall prior to connecting or extending the lines execute a Utility Agreement and Annexation Petition with the City. Such

agreement shall be binding upon the heirs and successors in title.

- (5) In order for any property which is, or becomes, located within another municipality to receive, or continue to receive water and/or wastewater services from the City of Greensboro, the owner or occupant shall pay those charges established pursuant to an agreement between that municipality and the City of Greensboro.
- (6) These provisions may be revised or modified at anytime by the City of Greensboro Council. Such Council approved revisions, modifications, or policy changes shall supersede these eligibility requirements.

### **3. *Requirements of Connection***

Within one year after the time when any water and wastewater main is completed and ready for use, the owner of every abutting lot whereon water is supplied for human use shall cause such lot to be connected with such water and wastewater mains, provided that the Water Resources Department shall notify, in writing, the property owner of the installation of said main and the property owner shall have one year after such notification to make the said connection. Within thirty days after a water connection is made, any open dug well on the premises shall be disconnected and/or abandoned per State and County Health requirements, and within thirty days after a wastewater connection is made any privy pit or septic tank after being cleaned shall be filled with clean compacted earth to the level of the ground surface. In those areas annexed into the City through the initiative of the City of Greensboro, the owners of the properties abutting streets where both water and wastewater are available shall at the time of annexation be required to connect onto water and wastewater mains within five (5) years from the effective date of annexation. In areas where water and wastewater mains are installed after annexation, the owners abutting those streets where both water and wastewater mains have been installed shall within five (5) years from the date of installation, connect onto water and wastewater mains. However, if the property abutting streets with water and wastewater has malfunction of a well or septic tank serving the property, then the owner will be required to connect to both water and wastewater within thirty (30) days after being notified in writing either by the City or the Guilford County Health Department.

### **4. *Disapproval of Application***

If, in the opinion of the Water Resources Director, the water and/or wastewater connection applied for will be of such size or character as to put too great a demand on any part of the system and disrupt the City's ordinary service, he shall disapprove the application until such time as adequate means are provided to eliminate the unsatisfactory condition.

If, at any time, changes are made by a consumer in his service requirements so as to create an unsatisfactory condition in the City's water or wastewater service, the Water Resources Director shall require the consumer to adopt remedial measures to eliminate the unsatisfactory condition. If the waste proposed to be discharged into the City's sewerage system is in the opinion of the Water Resources Director, of such a nature or of such quantity as to overload the existing sewage collection or treatment facilities, he shall disapprove the application and require the applicant to adopt remedial measures to eliminate the unsatisfactory condition. An appeal from the ruling by the Water Resources Director may be made to the City Manager and the City Manager's decision shall be final. The City shall in no way be responsible for any cost or inconvenience caused by a change in service requirements after an application has been approved or by an installation before the application has been approved.

**5. *Connections Prohibited***

No person shall cause any open gutter, rain water conductor, cesspool, privy vault, or steam exhaust, or other steam apparatus to be connected to any wastewater main without specific permission from the Water Resources Director. The City will allow a drain from a dumpster pad to be tied to the sanitary sewer if the area is curbed and no water other than that which falls on the dumpster will be drained to the sewer. A one time pad charge will be made based on a 400 square foot area and 45 inches of rainfall annually.

**6. *Separate Water and Wastewater Connections and Meters Required***

Each building shall have a separate water meter and where practical shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same building, an approved separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter. Each building shall have a separate wastewater connection.

## **7. *Ownership of Connections***

All meters, boxes, pipes and other equipment furnished and installed by the City in a water or wastewater connection shall remain the property of the City. If, after an installation is completed, the property owner requests that a meter or lateral be changed in size and this request is approved by the Water Resources Director or his designee, the property owner shall pay for the change of lateral as though it were a new connection and shall pay or be refunded the difference of the cost of meters in the original and new installations according to the current price of the two meters.

## **8. *Maintenance of Meters and Connections***

All meters and water and wastewater connections shall be maintained by the City at the City's expense, except meters required by Rule G-3 and G-4. All meters and water and wastewater connections installed by the City shall be maintained by the City at the City's expense with the exceptions below:

- (a) Meters required by Rule G-3 and G-4.
- (b) Meters installed on private property outside of the street right-of-way or easements. The property owner will be responsible for maintaining the area around the meter in good repair per Water Resources Department Standards. The meter box will be at ground level and not covered with dirt, debris, etc. The meter reader shall be able to read the meter without hindrance from brushes, trees, flowers, fences, etc.
- (c) If inadequate access is provided for reading and maintaining the meter, written notice will be given to the property owner to correct within 90 days. If not corrected within 90 days, an additional charge of \$50 shall be applied per billing in addition to estimated charges. Furthermore, water and sewer may be terminated if not corrected.

## **D. *Connection of Unapproved Supply***

No part of the City's water system shall be connected to any unapproved supply. If upon any premises both City water and water from any other source are used, the piping shall be completely separate. Pipes carrying water from a source other than the City's supply shall be painted yellow or a pre-approved color code or marking system.



## **E. Backflow Prevention**

All water lines connected to the water distribution system owned and operated by the City of Greensboro for use other than domestic type shall be equipped with an approved backflow and a back-siphonage control device. Upon notice from the City of Greensboro Water Resources Department, the customer will be required to have the cross connection backflow and back siphonage control device tested by a certified tester. The customer will submit satisfactory test results to the City of Greensboro Water Resources Department within 30 days of notice. Failure to properly test could result in discontinuance of service.

## **F. Expansion of System**

The City will maintain a program for approval of the construction or alteration of the water distribution and/or the wastewater collection system. The program will incorporate all requirements of the Division of Water Quality and/or the Division of Environmental Health for certification of the program. All design must be based on City design requirements. Upon completion of the construction or alteration of the distribution or collection system, the applicant shall submit a statement to the local approval program signed by a licensed professional engineer stating that construction was completed in substantial accordance with the approved plans and specifications and revised only in accordance with 10 NCAC 10D .0906.

### ***1. Water and Wastewater Connections***

Upon designing improvements to a street the City shall stub out water and wastewater connections to each buildable lot. When a connection terminates at the curb line, the connection shall not be extended to the property line and the meter set until the owner of the property or his agent applies for such connection. When the connection terminates at the property line, the meter shall not be set and the wastewater or water connection shall not be used until the owner of the property or his agent applies for service.

## **G. Application and Charges**

### **1. *Application For Service***

A service charge of \$15.00 for all water accounts inside and outside the City shall be necessary for each new application for water service. Applications for water service shall be made in writing. Each applicant must provide proper identification and only members of the immediate family and/or relatives may be authorized to sign for the applicant. If the property owner has a property management company representing them, the Water Resources Department reserves the right to require a document stating that the management company has been empowered by the property owner to sign up for application and oversee the property. It is the property owner's responsibility to make sure the Water Resources Customer Service Division is notified if there is a change in the management company overseeing the property. It is also the property owner's responsibility to let Customer Service know when the tenant moves out of the property.

If application is made for water service to premises on which delinquent water rents are or may be due, the application may be honored but the owner of the property will be advised in writing that delinquent water rents are due, or may be due on the premises, and that if these charges are not paid, they shall become a lien against property and shall be subject to advertising with possible foreclosure of property. If it is determined that any person has moved from a previous location leaving an unpaid water bill, that person will be provided water service if all delinquent water bills and penalties charged to him, or his or her spouse, if they were living together are paid. If these delinquent water bills are not paid at the time application is made or if thirty (30) days have elapsed since previous service has been terminated, the current account without further notice, will be discontinued and delinquent fees added as per Rule G-5.

Two final bills will be sent to the new address. The customer prior to the due date of the final notice, has a right to a hearing to appeal the bill.

### **2. *Deposit Required***

When any tenant of any premise makes application for water to be furnished to such premises, he or she shall be required to make a deposit as hereinafter set out to guarantee payment of the final water bill due upon termination of the water service. The deposit shall not be applied to a delinquent water bill, unless the delinquent water account is determined to be the final bill and service is terminated. When such tenant has the water finally cut off, he shall upon payment of all water bills due, be entitled to the

return of his deposit, or any balance thereof. If such tenant vacates the premises without notifying the Water Resources Department and having the water cut off, he shall forfeit any balance of such deposit remaining after the water bill has been deducted there from.

The amount of such required deposit shall be as follows: For any premises used as a dwelling house, seventy-five dollars (\$75.00); for any premises used for any other purpose, such an amount as equals three (3) times the average monthly or one and one half (1-1/2 ) the average quarterly consumption (as the monthly or quarterly rate is allowed) of other premises devoted to the same use in the same locations category with the minimum deposit of \$100.00 being required for commercial tenants. The making of the deposit required by this Rule shall not relieve any premises of liability for the payment of any water bill incurred by any tenant. Every landlord renting or leasing premises to tenants required by this Rule to make deposit, shall immediately notify the Water Resources Department upon the occupation or vacation of the rented or leased premises by the tenant.

**3. *Sewer Service Charges***

The owner of any property receiving sewer service and not using City water, except as hereinafter provided, shall have the option of installing and maintaining without cost to the City a meter or meters to measure the quantity of water received from any source other than the City's water supply system, but discharged into the City's sewers. Such meter or meters shall be installed only under the supervision and in accordance with the plans and specifications of the City or they will be charged an annual wastewater charge as approved by the City Council.

**4. *Water not Discharged to Wastewater System***

Any consumer who uses water from the City's water system for an industrial or commercial purpose so that the water used is not discharged into the wastewater system of the City shall not be charged for sewer service on said quantity; provided that the water used for such industrial or commercial purposes and not discharged into the City's wastewater system shall be accurately measured at the expense of the consumer.

Any consumer using water from the City's water system for purposes other than commercial or industrial, so that the water used is not discharged into the wastewater system of the City, may install and maintain without cost to the City a meter or meters to measure the quantity of water used but not discharged into the City's wastewater system. Such meter or meters shall be installed under the supervision and in accordance with the plans and

specifications of the City. He shall not be charged for wastewater service on quantity.

**5. *Discontinuance of Service***

When any consumer becomes delinquent in the payment of a regular monthly or quarterly services bill, there shall be mailed a written notice to the effect that if the service bill due is not paid on or before the date named in the notice, the water may be cut off. It may not be turned on again until the bill due has been paid together with any accumulated penalties. The notice shall also indicate that the user may request a hearing. The date named in such notice shall be fifteen (15) days from the date payable.

The customer upon his request, has a right to a hearing to appeal the discontinuance of water service at any time prior to proposed due date shown on final notice. If the consumer is a tenant, and the bill is not paid before the day following the date named in such notice, then the account is considered to be delinquent and a twenty dollars (\$20.00) penalty may be imposed. If the consumer is the owner of the property, the bill for the next billing period shall show that the bill for the previous period has not been paid. If the second bill is not paid, including the amount in arrears, a fifteen day notice shall be mailed and the \$20.00 penalty imposed as for a tenant. One week after the \$20.00 penalty is imposed an additional penalty of \$20.00 will be imposed. If water service is discontinued, the premises may then be condemned. The water may be cut on if the bill is paid within seven (7) days of the date of cutoff together with a delinquent fee of forty (\$40.00). After water has been cut off for seven (7) days at any occupied premises, the meter may be taken out and an additional fee of \$40.00 imposed.

The water service to any occupied premises shall not be restored until all service bill due together with all delinquent fees are paid.

If a consumer pays a service bill with a check that is returned unpaid for any reason, the consumer shall be informed of this occurrence and shall be given written notice mailed to the address given in his application that the water service may be terminated within seven (7) days of the date on the notice. A fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) shall be added to the account for processing the returned check. If the water is cut off, the delinquent fee for restoring water service shall be forty dollars (\$40.00). Any other delinquent fee that would have accrued due to the past due date of the bill shall also be paid.

**6. *Meters, Devices, and Testing***

All meters or other measuring devices installed or required to be used shall be under the supervision and control of the City and shall be installed

and maintained at cost to the owner of the property. Meters or other devices installed for the purpose of determining the quantity of water not discharged into the City's sewers shall be kept in repair, whether caused by ordinary wear and tear or other cause, and bills for repairs made by the City shall be added to and become a part of the wastewater bill. Any consumer may have a water meter test made by advance payment of the fee schedule based on meter size.

<b><u>Meter Size</u></b>	<b><u>Fees</u></b>
<b>5/8" - 1"</b>	<b>\$ 60.00</b>
<b>1¼" - 1½"</b>	<b>\$ 90.00</b>
<b>2"</b>	<b>\$ 120.00</b>
<b>3" and 4"</b>	<b>\$ 150.00</b>
<b>6"</b>	<b>\$ 180.00</b>
<b>8"</b>	<b>\$ 210.00</b>

If the consumption shown on the meter in question is greater than twice the average consumption for the preceding six months, and the reason for such an increase cannot be determined, the fee for testing the meter shall be waived. Since the most accurate water meters suitable for general use require a margin of approximately two and one-half percent for error, any meter which shows upon testing an error of not greater than two and one-half percent, it shall not be considered defective. If the meter is found to be over-registering in excess of two and one-half percent, refund shall be made for those billing periods up to one year in an amount equal to the total over-registration, and the fee paid for the test shall be refunded.

#### **7. *Adjustment of Overcharges***

The Water Resources Director, or his designee, shall have the authority to adjust any water bill, provided the charge is excessive and the cause of the excessive bill has been corrected, based upon the following conditions:

- (a) If the cause is a defect in a plumbing fixture and the water is returned to the wastewater system, the adjustment shall be calculated by determining an average water bill for the preceding year and writing off one-half (1/2) of the water and wastewater bill above an average bill.
- (b) If the cause is a burst pipe or an underground leak and the waste- water is not returned to the sanitary sewer system, the adjustment shall be calculated by determining an average water

and wastewater bill for the preceding year, and writing off all the wastewater bill and one-half (1/2) the water bill above an average bill.

- (c) If the cause is a frozen and burst pipe, the adjustment shall be calculated the same as in (b) above, provided reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure that further freezing of pipes will not occur.
- (d) If the cause is of an undetermined origin, and it does not appear upon investigation that the occupants of the premises served were in any way at fault for the excessive water bill, the adjusted bill shall be calculated the same as in (a) above. However, if the above conditions exist but the premises are vacant, and the water has been turned off and later turned back on, but unknown to the owner, the City will write off one-half (1/2) the water and sewer bill.
- (e) Any excessive residential bill which exceeds its average monthly or quarterly billing by more than two hundred dollars (\$200.00) due to undetermined cause may be rebated in an amount of 90% of the amount exceeding the average billing. "Undetermined cause" means a cause which is not attributable to leaks such as burst pipes, underground leaks, and defective plumbing leaks, or known negligent or deliberate use of water. In regard to leaks, it shall be incumbent upon the customer to have the plumbing properly checked and to provide written evidence that there are no leaks on the property side of the meter.
- (f) If the high bill has been aggravated in any way by the estimating of water billed by the City, the excess as determined by the reading of the meter, shall be equally spread over the entire period since the last actual meter reading, and the excess of all but the present billing shall be written off. The resulting excess of the present high billing may qualify for further adjustment on the basis of rules as stated above.
- (g) No adjustment shall be made for a period in excess of two billing periods, and not more than one adjustment for an excessive water bill caused by the same condition shall be made within a period of two (2) years, per customer. However, if there is a second request for an underground leak adjustment within the same two year period; the customer shall be granted a second adjustment provided the sum of the second

adjustment does not exceed the amount of the previous adjustment that was given within the two year period.

- (h) The City reserves the right to demand the proof considered satisfactory that plumbing repairs have been made before an adjustment is granted.
- (i) Around the middle of each month the Water Accounts Manager shall report by memorandum to the City Manager the circumstances and disposition of each application for water bill adjustment.

## **H. Miscellaneous Sales of Water and Materials**

### **1. Temporary Activities**

Water from a hydrant will be furnished any circus, road show, carnival, fair, or other similar temporary user at the rate in effect for a meter on a hydrant.

### **2. Building Activities**

Portable meters for connection to fire hydrants may be furnished by the City after an application and a deposit has been filed with the Water Resources Department. The deposit will be \$150.00 for meters up to 1 inch in size, \$200.00 for an 1½" meter, and \$300.00 for meters 2 inches and 3 inches in size. The deposit amount will be double for service provided to companies located outside Guilford County. The applicant shall be responsible for any damage to the hydrant, meter connections, etc., used in the installation, and the cost of any such damage shall be taken from the deposit. A service charge of \$20.00 per month, or any part of the month, shall be made for a meter on a hydrant in addition to the cost of the water used through the meter. After deducting the water rent, service charge, and any cost of damage to the installation, the City shall refund the balance of the deposit to the applicant as soon as the meter is removed and returned to the City stock.

While in use, no wrench shall be used on the hydrant except a hydrant wrench furnished by the City.

### **3. Material Sales**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 4.121 of the Charter of the City of Greensboro, the Water Resources Director is hereby authorized, through the City's purchasing agent, to sell from City stock to contractors, units of local government, or individual owners, water meters, water-works

fittings, materials not customarily stocked by plumbing contractors, and not available for purchase from any other source in a timely manner. Such sales shall be made on the basis of the original cost to the City of the item or items to be sold, plus reasonable overhead expenses.

## **I. Protection of System**

No person shall contaminate any portion of the City's water supply whether the same is a reservoir, tank, pipe, or treatment facility. No person shall wade, bathe, or swim in Lakes Higgins, Brandt, or Townsend.

Inspectors, Meter Readers or authorized employees of the City, whose duty it may be to enter upon private premises to examine meters, pipes or other fixtures used in connection with the City's water and sewer service shall have free access at all reasonable hours to all parts of such premises for the purpose of inspection, meter reading, examination of fixtures, and observation of the manner in which water is used. In case any inspector is refused admittance to any premises for any such purpose or is hindered or prevented from making such examination the water shall be turned off and shall not be turned on again until free access is given.

Tampering with meters and stopcocks - No person, except a duly authorized employee of the City, shall turn the stopcock installed in each meter box nor shall any person construct or have constructed any bypass around any meter except as may be installed and sealed by the City.

The fact that water is cut on to any premises by an occupant thereof without the knowledge of either the City or the owner shall not relieve such premises of liability for such unauthorized use of water.

Restaurants and food preparation businesses which discharge grease and food waste will be required to install an approved grease trap if one does not currently exist. Any individual or business which discharges any liquid or solids which will cause problems with the sewage collection system or the treatment of wastewater are deemed to be in violation of the code and will be subject to immediate discontinuance of service until the problem causing the discharge can be corrected to the satisfaction of the City.

If a user's service is found to be defective and taking on inflow or if an illegal connection is discovered then the City will require the user to repair service to acceptable condition. Users will be notified in writing and given 30 days to make necessary repairs.

All new plumbing constructed must provide a ground path back to the City water distribution system. This can be established by either the use of a metallic service line, or where PVC service lines are used, an insulated



grounding wire attached to the copper plumbing of the dwelling and connecting to the water meter setter.

**J. Guarantee of Quantity, Quality or Pressure**

The City of Greensboro operates its water and sewer systems based in accordance with the Federal and State regulations. The City does not guarantee the quality, quantity or pressure of its water supply. It is hereby made a portion of the terms on which the City furnished water to consumers that the City shall in no case be liable to any consumer for any defect in quality, quantity or pressure. The City shall not be liable to any consumer for damages resulting from the complete or partial cutting off of water; and no deduction shall be made from any water bill by reason of any such defect or deficiency. In every case where practicable ample notice, by the best means available shall be given when the water is to be cut off from any portion of the City. No City employee shall take responsibility for telling a property owner or occupant how best to care for his boiler, heater or other equipment which is affected by the discontinuance, either temporary or permanent. The owner or occupant shall be entirely responsible for his equipment and shall hold the City in no way responsible for damage thereof.

**K. Pretreatment Requirements**